

**DEPARTMENT:** NIAGARA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
**CLASSIFICATION:** NON-COMPETITIVE - NYSCSC APPROVED 06/17/2010  
**APPROVED:** DECEMBER 1, 2016

**SENIOR FORENSIC CRIMINALIST**

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:** The incumbent is responsible for the proper maintenance of forensic evidence submitted to the laboratory. The work involves performing complex laboratory analysis on physical evidence, devising analytical approaches to casework that may include problematic research and/or generating or modifying methods, interpreting analytical results, preparing written reports and testifying as an expert witness in a court of law. This position is distinguished from the Forensic Criminalist II in that the incumbent provides supervision and establishes policy and procedure for the chosen specialty area of expertise. Work is performed under the direct supervision of the Director of Forensic Laboratory. The incumbent exercises direct supervision over subordinate Forensic Criminalists. Does related work as required.

**TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

1. Handles and stores evidence in accordance with established administrative guidelines for handling analysis and destruction of evidence including maintenance of forensic samples, logging procedures, case labeling and tracking of samples from the submitting phase to the court proceedings;
2. Performs complex laboratory analysis on physical evidence and devises analytical approaches to casework that may include problematic research and/or generating or modifying methods;
3. Performs DNA analysis on evidence;
4. Performs technical and administrative review of case files;
5. Identifies and compares evidence by qualitative, quantitative, microscopic and any other scientific means available as necessary;
6. Provides conclusions and opinions in the form of a written report based on the interpretation of observations and analytical test results;
7. Monitors incoming calls from the District Attorney's Office, Deputy Sheriff Criminal Investigators, and other law enforcement agencies;
8. Independently assists law enforcement agencies in processing crime scenes through documenting and protecting evidence according to laboratory procedures ensuring that the chain of custody is maintained;
9. Performs annual audits and review of the system;
10. Assists in training other forensic scientists and provides instruction to law enforcement agencies on the collection and preservation of evidence;
11. Supervises and trains subordinate Forensic Criminalists;
12. Assists in complying with all health and safety procedures and protocols, which apply to forensic laboratories;
13. Testifies in court regarding laboratory analyses and the significance of the results as required.

**FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES & PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of analytical chemistry as it applies to the fields of trace evidence, criminalistics, and forensic science; thorough knowledge of the principles, practices, instruments, and methods used in trace evidence analysis as applied to the collection and analysis of criminal evidence; thorough knowledge of use of standard laboratory equipment, including microscopes, spectrophotometers, spectrographs, chromatographs and computer-based data systems; thorough knowledge of the penal law and rules of evidence as they relate to the technical analysis and handling of evidence; thorough knowledge of current developments and trends in crime detection and investigative techniques; good knowledge of law enforcement practices and procedures; skill in the application of laboratory and scientific research practices and techniques to trace evidence analysis; skill in the use of personal computer; skill in the use of laboratory equipment related to trace evidence analysis; ability to apply scientific procedures, methodology, and formulas to assigned work; ability to analyze and evaluate information and observations, and to arrive at and construct logical and sound conclusions; ability to explain laboratory analysis techniques, procedures and theories in a clear and concise manner so that non-scientists may understand the significance of the results obtained using these procedures; ability to operate and perform routine maintenance on complex laboratory equipment; ability to manage data base records, maintain accurate records and prepare reports; ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; ability to prepare and deliver legal testimony accurately and be cross-examined and remain composed in court; ability to establish and maintain effective professional relationships; organizational ability; ability to plan and supervise the work of others; a high degree of accuracy, initiative, motivation and sound judgment; physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

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## **SENIOR FORENSIC CRIMINALIST CONTINUED**

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State Board of Regents to grant degrees with a Master's Degree or higher in a natural science, a forensic science, an engineering science, toxicology or criminalistics, including or supplemented by at least twelve (12) credit hours in chemistry **and** four (4) years of full-time paid experience in a New York State accredited forensic laboratory; **OR**

Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State Board of Regents to grant degrees with a Bachelor's Degree or higher in a natural science, a forensic science, an engineering science, toxicology or criminalistics, including or supplemented by at least twelve (12) credit hours in chemistry **and** five (5) years of full-time paid experience in a New York State accredited forensic laboratory.

### **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Possession of a valid New York State driver's license at time of appointment and throughout employment;
2. Successful completion of a background check;
3. Additional continuing education and training may be required as a condition of employment;
4. Incumbents must pass a competency test prior to assuming casework responsibility and must pass a proficiency test annually, in accordance with accreditation requirements.

**NOTE:** Natural Sciences include Biology, Earth Science, Botany, Physics, Chemistry and Zoology.

Qualifications cannot be changed since jurisdictional classification was approved based on the qualifications meeting certain criteria established by NYSCSC.